

North Platte Basin Roundtable Meeting, 12.18.2007
Parks District USFS Conference Room, 7-9 pm
Minutes Submitted by Curran Trick

Members/Guests Present

Mike Allnutt
Barbara Vasquez
Kent Crowder
Hal Hagen
Dave Meyring
Dirk Ramsey
Carl Trick II
Ty Wattenberg
Rick Wyatt
Mike Hohnholtz

Kent Crowder called the meeting to order, members made introductions.

Rick Wyatt motioned to approve the minutes from the 11.27.2007 meeting, Dirk Ramsey seconded the motion. Minutes approved.

Status Report on project to integrate a North Platte Water Resources model to the South Platte Decision Support System:

Dave Meyring: reported on meeting with Erin Wilson, P.E. from Leonard Rice Engineering, Inc. He spoke briefly about what's being done in this basin; people who are familiar with the various areas are looking over the maps, reviewing the irrigated acreages that are delineated. Starting in mid-January, Erin and some of her helpers will come up here w/ detailed maps and try to correct any deficiencies.

Discussion about irrigated acres in N. Platte Basin:

Barbara asked: how many irrigated acres in this basin?

Kent Crowder: about 106,000 acres delineated by Leonard Rice.

Carl Trick: irrigated acreage doesn't pertain to Laramie River side, just Jackson county side.

Discussion about irrigated acres on Laramie River side.

Kent: January 14th is tentative date for meeting w/ Erin. Kent will make sure and let everyone know.

Discussion about the three-state agreement and the history of irrigated acres in the North Platte Basin:

Hal Hagen asked: when they made the decree, was 135,000 the amount of acres that were in irrigated use at the time?

Kent: yes, that's what they reported. We think they included everything, irrigated and sub-irrigated lands. What we are trying to do now is model our water, not to prove or disprove the irrigated acres; to get a surface water model.

Barbara: what happens if we can't validate the adjudicated irrigated acres? Hal: Is there a use-it-or-lose-it rule?

Kent: we don't know that for sure one way or the other.

Carl: at the end of the 13 year period there will be a re-evaluation between the 3 states and the USFWS.

More discussion about the three-state:

Kent: anything above the 134,467 is considered a new water related activity, it would have to be mitigated.

Hal: can we change the uses w/ the extra acres we may not be using to multi-use and not just irrigation?

Carl: The only use covered under the decree is irrigation, but who owns it?

We aren't sure if we can trade those 1-1.

Kent: the decree is silent on development of unappropriated waters in the North Platte right now

Discussion about reopening the decree: pros and cons, in-stream flows, off-channel, and storage

Storage projects:

The roundtable wants to solicit ideas for storage projects.

Ty Wattenberg talked about storage projects on the west side and fighting our own tax dollars in the Attorney General's office.

Discussion about the state level, and how storage (or lack of storage) should be a bigger issue at the moment.

Nonconsumptive Needs Assessment Subcommittee Report:

Barbara V went to the Gunnison mtg. on Dec. 17th

The N. Platte non-consumptive committee met on Dec 11th

Barbara gave a background on the non-consumptive process:

By the end of this year ('07) the basin is supposed to have the attributes established, and do the quantification and flow-evaluation in '08, and the roundtable process ends at the end of '09.

Goals and objectives for N. Platte Basin non-consumptive subcommittee:

1. Identify important non-consumptive uses in the basin
2. Identify important geographical areas for non-consumptive uses
3. Identify where there are positive interactions between consumptive and non-consumptive uses in the basin
4. Rank order of importance of non-consumptive uses (Barbara thinks if we focus on geographic areas, important landscapes and habitats, they will be easier to rank)
5. Estimate what water we need to maintain non-consumptive uses.

Barbara solicited comments from the roundtable:

Hal spoke to the GIS data available in this basin: we don't have a whole lot of information

Carl said it is important to find out the positive interactions between consumptive and non-consumptive, #3 is critical

Barbara: the subcommittee completed a spreadsheet for the basin, and assigned data gathering to certain members of the committee.

Attributes identified (see handout for more information, and assigned data gathering):

1. fisheries
2. wildlife habitat
3. wetlands
4. water recreation (non-fishing)
5. state water rights for non-consumptive use
6. surface water quality

Discussion about federally listed endangered species habitat, there is none in the basin at the moment. Discussion about what has to happen for things to get listed, and listed species.

Kent asked about flatwater lakes: he thought the N. Platte should make sure we identify our important lakes and streams.

Discussion about 303(d) and listed streams in the North Platte Basin: (Stream segments in Jackson County are included under the Upper Colorado River Basin in the Colorado Water Quality Control Division/Commission Documents and Proposed Rule Notices)

Stream Segments on the "For Sure" 303(d) list being listed as Water-Quality Limited Segments Requiring TMDLS:

Segment Description-Tribes to the N Platte exc Segs 1, 5,6 &7 **Portion**-Illinois River

Impairment-Fe (trec)

Segment Description -Government Creek, Spring Creek **Portion**-Spring Creek

Impairment-DO

Stream Segments on the 303(d) Monitoring and Evaluation List:

Segment Description-Tribes to the N Platte & Encampment Rivers w/in Wilderness Areas

Portion-South Fork Big Creek **Parameter**-Cu

Segment Description – all tributaries to N Platte except segments 1, 5, 6, 7 **Portion**-Grizzly Creek, Little Grizzly Creek **Parameter**-Aquatic Life Use

Segment Description – all tributaries to N Platte except segments 1, 5, 6, 7 **Portion**-Snyder Creek, Parkview Creek Watershed **Parameter**-sediment

Discussion about the Wetland survey: the owl mountain partnership data is insufficient; very little data is available at the moment.

Barbara V and Pete Conovitz went to the Gunnison workshop on December 17th, it focused on quantification methods. All the info from the workshop will be posted online on the IBCC website.

Barbara thought the geographical approach from the Yampa/White brought up at the workshop was very useful, that's one approach to looking at the mapping.

The meeting also spoke to methods for stream flow quantification, the basin is not required to do stream flow quantification, however, it is recommended.

*New tool: watershed evaluation tool—takes data from gauging, backs out the diversion, and for regions with no gauging, they estimate flow. End result: a basin-wide stream flow model.

The State's proposal: do a risk-based model for attributes. The state has money to do this for a few basins, and they are looking for basins to volunteer to pilot this project, at no cost to the basin. Barbara suggested the roundtable consider this project.

Carl and Kent will ask Ray Alvarado if this is something that lines up with what we are doing with CDM, and how that fits into our model.

Barbara will call Nicole Rowan to put our name in the queue to have this free evaluation, and we will have an answer for them by mid-January.

Carl questioned whether or not we have sufficient gauging in this basin to do the project. We don't have a whole lot of gauging set up at the moment.

Barbara might ask Sue Petersmann to see if we have the right gauging.

Application of the Colorado Natural Heritage Program to the Roundtable for Basin Account money:

Colorado Natural Heritage Program would like to apply for Basin Account money for a wetlands inventory in 2008. Barbara handed out the proposal.

They might apply for 50/50 basin account and statewide account

Statewide account moneys are considered in March

Hal brought up the question of asking for a task order, can we get the same data through a task order?

Discussion: if we need to get this done in '08, it probably won't get done through a task order.

Hal: will this application compete for money that could later be used to secure the town's water supply?

Discussion about applications, competing or not.

Discussion about the January meeting: We need to look at the dates; the January meeting might need to be modified in order to consider the application in time for the CWCB deadline.

CNHP will request 50/50 money

Curran will send out an electronic copy of the application to the roundtable members, in order for members to consider it before the January meeting.

Discussion about cost: does the cost change based on how many private landowners agree to open their doors to the project, more or less expensive?

The January meeting will be moved up to the 16th.

Meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting:

Date: Wednesday, January 16, 2008

Time: 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Forest Service Office